Union Representative Role

Motivation: *To build the union on campus to be able to reach and engage with all grad workers, we must be able to have publicly known supporters who can clearly represent what the union stands for and what we are doing. Union representatives serve this critical role as the layer of union activity most frequently engaging with the majority of grad workers. In this document, we outline the responsibilities and expectations of the role, training and support that we offer, and resources relevant to the role.*

Role Responsibilities and Expectations
Union reps take on a few key tasks, including

1. **Talking to grad workers in their department about the issues affecting them.** This is the sort of conversation that the union is really built on. We ultimately aim to represent the interests of all grad workers and the only way we can do this faithfully is by doing mass outreach and talking to grad workers abouts what they care about and want to see change. We also do this through department orientations and town halls as a way to speak with larger groups of students, and by collaborating with existing student group organizations. Individually, each union rep will have a group of grad workers they are responsible for reaching out to.
2. **Communicating about the unionization effort to grad workers.** We know to expect that the admin is going to run an anti-union effort against our campaign once we go public. That means that our effort on campus will be a battle of messaging. The administration will use their platform and institutional authority to sow doubt, fear, and confusion about unionizing. Our union reps will have to combat this anti-union campaign by building trust with their peers and educate people about the reality of grad unionization.
3. **Collecting authorization cards.** Once the union goes public, we will begin collecting authorization cards. This is one of the most important tasks of union reps and we will need all of our reps to commit first and foremost to help collect cards from the grad workers they know. We will provide a specialized training on how to collect authorization cards prior to and after we go public to support this task.

Each of these tasks should be at their core focused on building stronger connections between grad workers on campus to ensure that the union has a positive presence in people's lives and that grad workers feel a sense of ownership and voice in the grad union even if they do not wish to get very involved.

Training and Support
All union reps should go through an orientation session, an organizing conversation training, an anti-union talking points training, and practice 2-1 conversations with an experienced organizer until they are comfortable. We offer all of these trainings on a regular basis. If a union rep is ever in need of help with 2-1 organizing conversations, then they can find help by posting to the *#2-1_convo_requests* channel. All union reps should aim to have at least 5 organizing

conversations with new contacts. This is important for practice, but will also make sure that we contact as many of our peers as possible before we go public.

Union reps can get support in their role for a number of places in the union. Department coordinators are leading organizers in the departments who coordinate overall department organizing and are responsible for supporting and developing the union reps in their department. Most departments additionally have department coordination meetings which serves as a weekly space to discuss organizing in the department and is meant to support the development of union leaders and organizers. For departments lacking department coordinators, union reps can also attend Recruitment Team meetings to discuss development of their department organizing and get advice on how to proceed. Finally, our staff organizer can provide support to any and all union reps upon request.

Resources

- START HERE
- Active areas of work
    - ISWG
    - RISE
- Airtable
- Tips for meeting with admin
- On-boarding document
- Core organizer roles
- Department Status and Next Steps
- Going Public Brief
- Going Public Ladder of Asks for Broad Engagement
- Going Public Student Group Ladder of Asks